

Gold Leader

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Summary: Some much needed back-up arrives for the assault on Starkiller Base, but for a certain ace pilot that back-up means much, much more. Originally a one-shot, will now include some additional one-shots about Poe and Ry's childhood and life together.
Poe/OC.

1. Chapter 1

I've been watching The Force Awakens basically on repeat for the last week and Poe is officially my new boyfriend. Don't tell my real-life boyfriend.

I'm not sure what this actually is, but I was just daydreaming and reading lots of fanfiction and had a little plot bunny. I'm genuinely not sure how I feel about it but figured, hey. No kriffing reason not to. Unsure about writing more, so a one-shot for now.

Rymer Keen is actually a name I got from a Hunger Games name generator that I Star Wars-ified.

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* * *

><p>Finn watched the proceedings anxiously. He had bluffed his way into getting planetside, now he just had to hold it together until he could find Rey. He looked at over at Poe and a pang of guilt hit him. The pilot was his first friend, and he felt bad lying to him.</p>

Poe bit his lip as he looked over the plans to Starkiller Base, then brought his eyes to the general's.

"It's a solid plan, General, and I know my squadrons are up for the task, but I just don't think we'll have enough sheer

firepower."

General Organa nodded, seeming to contemplate this for a moment, before going still. Her eyes slowly lit up, and she smiled at her favorite commander. "How does a little back-up sound?"

Poe's brow furrowed. "Back-up?"

"Officer Skall, please patch through the incoming transmission," the general asked her communications officer, who looked confused.

"General, what transmi—" his eyes snapped to his datapad as it beeped, and his eyes furrowed further before pressing a few buttons. A female voice rang clearly from the pad.

"Alpha Base, this is Gold Leader flying in with Yellow and White Squadrons, requesting permission to enter airspace. Do you copy."

Finn glanced around curiously as a few people in the crowd around them gasped, and smiles were exchanged all around. Poe straightened, a disbelieving grin splitting his face, and even BB-8 rolled back in surprise. General Organa gestured for the pad.

"Copy that. Permission granted, Gold Leader. Welcome back, we're all glad you're home."

The woman was clearly smiling as she answered. "We're glad to be home, General. Entering airspace, landing in approximately two minutes. Gold Leader out."

Finn grew more confused as excited murmurs broke out around the room, and another glance at Poe looked like it was taking every ounce of discipline he had to remain in place. He watched the pilot take a deep breath.

"General—"

"Go, Dameron." General Organa's voice was amused and affectionate as she waved a hand towards the door. Poe smiled brilliantly, clapping Finn once on the shoulder as he turned and sprinted from the room, BB-8 zooming after with a series of excited whirs and chirps. Finn stared after them, now utterly lost as more people followed, before noticing the general at his elbow.

"Walk me to the tarmac, Finn." The ex-Stormtrooper stared at her a moment before nodding, letting her lead the way even as a contingent of her advisers and officers followed behind them.

"I take it you haven't heard of Commander Keen just yet?" she asked him as they made a brisk pace through the halls. Finn shook his head. "I've had her stationed with her squadrons on the other side of the galaxy for the last six months, limited communications, working hard on defense and recon while the Resistance establishes a stronger foothold. I didn't send for her, but I'd wager her sense of duty had them at lightspeed in record time as soon as she heard of the destruction of the Hosnian System."

Finn nodded, though he wasn't quite sure why she was telling him all

this. "She sounds like a good soldier," he said, unable to think of anything else.

"She is that, and a good woman. As some people around here know better than others."

By now they had stepped onto the sunlit tarmac. Poe's haste had been unnecessary, as he stood bouncing on the balls of his feet as the X-Wings came into view over the mountains, BB-8 spinning and chirping at his side. Cheers began to erupt as the roar of the engines came into range, and the lead ship, painted black like Poe's but with a gold stripe instead of orange, did a single loop-the-loop before coming in to land some 300 yards from where they stood. Finn watched Poe take off like a shot as the pilot climbed out, dropping her helmet in the cockpit before jumping to the ground, dashing forward to meet him halfway. She leaped into his arms, legs wrapping around his waist as their lips crashed together, both hands coming up to grasp his face. Finn blinked as his jaw dropped open, and he looked down at the general for confirmation. She nodded, chuckling.

"Let's just give them a moment." They waited patiently, averting their eyes even as a few of the other pilots cat-called their commanding officers. The couple ignored them, taking their time - it had been six months, Finn told himself, shrugging. When he glanced back over, the commander was back on her feet, being greeted enthusiastically by BB-8. She laughed and knelt down to throw her arms around the little droid. When she straightened, she caught sight of the general, and visibly steeled herself before walking over, Poe and BB-8 at her heels.

"General, I-"

"Don't apologize for abandoning your post, Commander, we're lucky you showed up when you did. You've done good work for Admiral Nil'Sor, but we need you here now. And...I'm sorry about your brother. We lost a lot of good souls in the Hosnian System." Commander Keen softened with relief and a little sadness, smiling at the older woman.

"Thank you, ma'am. So what are we going to do about these sons of banthas?"

"I'll let Commander Dameron fill you in. We've got a few hours before it's time to head out. Welcome home, Rymer." The younger woman nodded at her as she turned and left the little group. Poe took the opportunity to angle the female pilot towards Finn.

"Buddy, this is the one, the only, the beautiful Commander Rymer Keen. Gold Leader of the Resistance, second best pilot in the galaxy, and my exceedingly better half. Ry, this is my new friend Finn."

Rymer's eyes widened. "Finn? As in the Stormtrooper defector who saved you from the First Order?" At Poe's nod, Rymer threw her arms around Finn's neck. "Thank you," was breathed fervently into his ear. Finn chuckled as he hugged her back, Poe grinning on happily. She pulled away, telling him, "I owe you every drink you ever want for the rest of your life. I mean it." Finn's eyebrows shot up, and he looked at Poe, impressed.

"I like her."

Poe looked like he couldn't stop smiling, slinging an arm around her shoulders. "Me too, buddy." There was a heavy nudge to his legs and an indignant beep, and they laughed. "We know you like her too BB-8!"

Rymer squeezed his waist once, then pulled away. "I need to take care of my ship, then I'll meet you in the canteen and you can catch me up while I eat something. I'll see you both there!"

Finn watched Poe watch her jog back towards her ship. "I don't have to go with you guys if you want some time alone."

Poe grinned shamelessly at having been caught staring, and shook his head. "No way, my friend. Let's go." He clapped a hand over the back of Finn's neck, tugging him along. "I never did tell you about Ry, did I?"

"In your defense our ship was crashing." Both men laughed. "How long have you been together?"

"Just about as long as I can remember." Poe's laugh echoed through the halls at Finn's raised eyebrow. "Really. We grew up together on Yavin-4. There was never any question of being together or not, we just were. We flew for the Republic together and then defected together. Honestly, these last six months is the longest we've ever been apart." His happiness was obvious and infectious and Finn found himself smiling with the ace pilot.

They reached the canteen in short order, gathering enough food for the three of them. Finn was disbelieving that Rymer would eat as much food as Poe seemed to think she would, but the other man just winked and said he'd be surprised. It had been nearly twenty minutes when Rymer walked in, voice slightly raised at the white and green BB unit that was trailing her and beeping angrily.

"Oh stop it, you! You were in low power mode, I was letting you sleep!" She looked around the room, spotting them, and pointed them out to the droid. "There!" she said exasperatedly. "There they are! Go say hello!" The BB unit whizzed away, now beeping with excitement as it approached.

Poe grin was as perpetual as ever, and he knelt quickly to greet the little droid. "Hey there BB-4! Did you take good care of our Commander while you were away?" BB-4 spun and chirruped with affirmation. "That's my girl. I knew I could count on you." BB-4 gave a pleased whir, nudging him once with her round body, before rolling away to greet BB-8.

Rymer reached them, shaking her head. "I let her charge for a few extra minutes and I'm the bad guy. No good deed, I tell you." She had clearly managed a shower in the short interim, and her damp hair had fluffed up without the layer of sweat and grime. The dark shaggy waves shot with vibrant orange were shortest in the back, the right side angling to her chin and the left reaching down to her shoulder. Poe grinned, looking her up and down, taking in the thin straps of the tunic that slit at her hips and trailed to her knees in the front and back, the thin leggings underneath and the flat, short boots, all in soft shades of brown. Finn noticed for the first time that her eyes were the same vibrant green as her BB unit.

"Your hair's gotten longer," Poe said, reaching out to curl a lock around his finger as she sat in the chair scooted close to him. "It was shaved in the back last time I saw you. I like it."

"I didn't have time to maintain it," she shrugged, tearing into the plate he slid in front of her with gusto as he tucked her securely under his arm.

Poe raised an eyebrow. "You didn't have time to cut it but you had time to keep putting orange in it?"

Rymer winked at him as she chewed and swallowed a bite of bread. "It's your favorite color, Commander." Poe grinned back, a little lewdly.

Finn chuckled from across the table, finishing the last of his meal. "Are you sure I'm not in your way right now?"

Poe actually looked a little embarrassed as Rymer laughed, only taking another large bite, this time of a purple fruit. "Sorry, buddy. I actually do need to brief you, Ry." The couple slid apart, Poe's arm coming back to his own chair. They both sat up a little straighter, stepping into their roles as Commanders, even as Rymer smirked at the two men.

"So tell me about this shiny toy we get to go blow up."

* * *

><p>I feel the need to say I'm sorry.</p>

2. Chapter 2

Wow. I honestly wasn't expecting any reviews at all, let alone 6 in 24 hours. Thanks you guys! I'm glad you like Ry and her relationship with Poe. I didn't think so many people would find it so captivating!

SuperCocoLoco - Thank you! I think I'll tackle that later, but for now I want to write a little about them as children and how they grew up together.

Leia - Thank you so much!

Zafrina - I'm going to try! I hope you like it and I can stick it out!

Firestar007 - Thank you! Ry and Poe go a little nuts when they fly together, and their squadrons feed off of them and everybody has a great time. You'll see eventually!

redswallow - Thank you! I'm hoping to flesh her out a bit more, I hope you continue to enjoy!

Souffl3Girl - Thank you! I'm going to write some on their childhood on Yavin-4, and hopefully some more TFA and maybe even post-TFA stuff. I hope you like it!

I have to admit, I'm not a hardcore Star Wars fan. I recently marathoned the original trilogy for the first time with my brother to get better background on TFA, but I'm not well-versed in the lore, so any mistakes you see are due to that ignorance. I don't know much about Yavin-4, so I'm just going to use my imagination.

I don't know if this will be more than just a few one-shots and snippets, but let's see where it takes us! If you have any requests or suggestions, please message me or leave them in a review! We're starting off with the first meeting.

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* * *

><p>YAVIN-4

4 YEARS OLD

Poe stood next to his mother, one hand clasped in her tunic as he eyed the little girl standing a few feet from him. She held the hand of her own mother, who was speaking with Shara on their doorstep. Poe was torn between feeling gleeful and wary - he had been hoping for another kid to move close by, he just hoped this girl would be fun to play with.

"We've just finished building our house on the other side of those trees, and wanted to introduce ourselves. My name is Tali Keen, this is my daughter Rymer."

"It's a pleasure to meet you Tali, Rymer. I'm Shara Dameron, this is my son Poe." Poe waved with the hand not clutching his mother's tunic, a gesture Rymer returned. "You and Poe are the only ones your age around here, Rymer. You two should stick together."

Poe nodded, deciding he wanted to be friends. "Wanna go play in the forest?"

Rymer's green eyes widened and she smiled. "Okay!" She let go of her mother's hand, instead grabbing Poe's. He looked at their clasped hands with a furrowed brow before shrugging and pulling her along towards the treeline.

Their mothers watched them for several moments, making sure they stayed within earshot and they could still catch glimpses as they ran through the trees. It wasn't long before shrieks of laughter could be heard, and Tali and Shara shared a smile. They resumed their chat, discussing life in the colony and what had brought the Keen family to Yavin-4. They found themselves laughing nearly as much as their children as nearly an hour passed.

"Mama Tali! Mama Tali!"

Both women were instantly ready to soothe whatever hurt had caused such a scream, but the smile on both children's faces quelled their panic as Rymer crashed into her mother's legs.

"Mama Tali, Poe says his mama's a pilot and that she can take us flying sometimes and she could even teach us when we get bigger can I do it can I please!" Tali raised one eyebrow at Shara, who smiled and

nodded, confirming the truth of the statement. Tali schooled her features into sternness, looking between both children.

"Rymer Keen, you know better than to ask me a question like that..." both children sagged with disappointment, until a speeder engine could be heard with perfect timing, "...before your mother gets home. She has to say yes, too."

Rymer lit up again, grabbing Poe by the hand and running back down the drive and around the corner that led to their house. "Mama Delu! Mama Delu!"

Tali and Shara finally burst out laughing.

"Tali, I think your daughter might actually be able to keep my son on his toes."

"I'll just be glad if he can keep up with her, my wife and I find her frankly exhausting."

At that moment another woman rounded the corner, speedster helmet under one arm and both children at her heels, talking a mile a minute. Delu met her wife's eye with an amused grin, before offering her hand to Shara. "Delu Keen," she said. "So what's this about teaching my kid to fly?"

Shara shook her hand. "I flew with the Resistance, and I've promised to teach Poe when he's old enough. I'd be happy to teach Rymer, as well. Until then, she's always welcome to fly with us."

Delu picked up on the game instantly when she saw Tali's wink, and she pretended to be thoughtful about it. "Weeeelllll..."

"_Mama!_" Rymer begged plaintively, and Delu could no longer hide her laughter.

"Alright, alright! Of course you can, little starfighter. Just promise to be safe."

Poe was instantly on his own mother's arm. "Can we fly now, Mama? Please?"

"No sir. Your father will be home soon. Go play in the forest some more before dinner." Poe and Rymer both drooped dejectedly, and Rymer turned to follow him back towards the trees. Shara exchanged a glance with the girl's mothers, sharing an eyeroll at the pitiful sight. "Which you're all invited to!" she called after them. "And we can go flying after." The children straightened immediately, running back to throw their arms around her legs. She laughed, ruffling both heads of dark hair, before they let go and ran back towards the trees, hand in hand.

Delu chuckled after them. "Now that is what I call trouble."

3. Chapter 3

I have two theme songs for Poe and Rymer, "Where No One Goes" by Jonsi (from the How to Train Your Dragon 2 soundtrack) and "Geronimo" by the group Sheppard. They seem fitting, and I plan on listening to

them on repeat when it comes time to write any X-Wing battle scenes.

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* * *

><p>YAVIN-4

6 YEARS OLD

"What do you mean, a little brother?"

Rymer sat nestled between both of her mothers on their couch. They had told her at breakfast that they needed to talk to her about something very important before she left to play with Poe for the day. She had been scared she was in trouble - did they find out about the cookies? Or the datapad? Or the time she and Poe played in the A-Wing without permission? Or the...

"Rymer, do you remember the day you came to live with us?" Delu asked gently.

The little girl's brow furrowed. She had dreams, sometimes, of feeling lonely even though there were lots of other kids around, and then suddenly not being lonely any more because her mamas were there. But was that the same thing? "I don't...think so..."

"It was almost your third nameday," Tali said, tweaking her cheek. "We were so excited to bring you home, because you hadn't had a real home in a long time. We wanted a family. We loved you from the moment we saw you, and we knew that you were meant to be our daughter. That's why we brought you home, where you belong."

Delu leaned in, tucking Rymer under her arm. "Your Mama Tali and I have been thinking for a long time about making our family just a little bit bigger. We decided that now, here on Yavin-4 where we're all so happy, it was the right time to do that. And we found a little boy that's supposed to be a part of our family, just like you."

"Where?"

"In a place a lot like where we found you, where little boys and girls go when they need families," Delu said. "He's a lot smaller than you were, still a baby. His name is Davlon, and he'll be coming here to live with us next week."

Both women waited as the small girl chewed over this information.

"Why?"

Tali met her wife's eyes before speaking. "Because he needs a family, and who better than two mamas and a big sister to love him and take care of him?"

"But you're my mamas! I don't want a little brother!"

The women exchanged a pained glance. They had been afraid of this. "I

know you're scared, sweetie," Tali started soothingly. "We still love you. We're still your mamas, that will never change. You're just going to have to share us with Davlon from now on. You're such a big, strong girl. You can do that for your mamas, can't you?"

"No! I don't want him!" Before either mother could stop her, she had pushed from the couch and run through the door to their home, little feet pounding as she rounded the corner at the end of their walkway. They followed quickly, knowing precisely where she was going.

Shara, having been made aware of the morning's topic of conversation, was already outside her own house with Poe, who was playing halfheartedly with a toy X-Wing as he waited for his best friend. Seeing the distraught look on the young girl's face as she ran up was heartbreaking, and a glance at the end of the walkway showed two equally distraught mothers. Shara nodded to them once, assuring them that she had Rymer, and would take care of her and do what she could to help with the situation.

"How about I take you two for your first flying lesson today?"

* * *

><p>Poe and Rymer were still small enough that she could have one on each knee, little helmets knocking into each other, as she pulled her trusted A-Wing into the air. Heading for a secluded area she knew would be unpopulated, Shara began to quiz them.</p>

"Where is the ignition?" They pointed immediately to the correct button. "Thrusters? Autopilot? Blasters?" She continued to question them randomly, occasionally pretending they got it wrong, making them giggle when she finally 'realized' how smart they were. Rymer's despair began to dissipate, but a certain level of anxiety lingered.

Finally deeming them a safe distance from civilization, Shara began to fly lazily in a circle. "Alright, who's first?"

Shara had fully expected an argument to ensue, and was trying to come up with the best way of convincing Poe to let Rymer steer first when the young boy spoke up himself.

"Ry should do it." Even Rymer looked surprised at his immediate suggestion.

"Are...are you sure? It's your mama's ship..."

Poe nodded enthusiastically, dark curls bouncing. "Yup! Mama always says flying makes her feel better when she's sad, and you're sad now, so maybe it'll help you feel better too!"

Shara felt her eyes begin to well with proud tears even as Rymer grinned brightly. "Thanks Poe!" The little girl looked up at her expectantly now.

"Yes, thank you Poe. Alright, gently now, just like this..."

* * *

><p>As excited as the impromptu lesson had made her, Rymer was still

quieter than usual as Shara deposited the children in the sitting room to play while she made lunch. Poe chattered away for the both of them, and Rymer seemed grateful for it, letting him lead their playtime as she paid only partial attention.<p>

Kes arrived home shortly for lunch, as he did every day, greeting his wife with a smile and a kiss as he glanced in on the children. He noticed Rymer's mood immediately.

"That bad, huh?"

Shara sighed. "That bad. I gave them their first real lesson in the A-Wing today, and that—" she indicated the sitting room at large "-is the best I could do. I think you should talk to her."

Kes was already nodding as he kissed her cheek. "I'm on it." He moved through to the sitting room, greeting both children by ruffling their hair.

"Hi Papa!"

"Hi Kes."

Kes eyed the dejected girl. "Hi kids. Poe, your mom needs your help in the kitchen. I'll help Ry clean this up." Poe bounced up and into the kitchen immediately, and Kes took his place on the floor. Rymer didn't meet his eyes, methodically putting the small toy ships back in their case.

"So your mamas told you the news this morning, did they?"

Rymer froze, then hunched in on herself. "What news?" She was putting the toys away more forcefully now.

"About your little brother."

"I don't want a little brother!" she snapped angrily. "They're my mamas! They already brought me home and they don't need another baby!"

Kes only nodded, seating himself a little more comfortable on the floor, leaning his back against the couch. He patted the carpet next to him, and the little girl crawled over, nestling into his side.

"You know, my Mama and Papa brought me home from the same kind of place you came from."

Rymer's head shot up, eyes wide and damp. "R-really?"

"Mm-hmm. Remember Poe's Aunt Jennasia, my big sister that visited for his nameday last year? They brought her home a few years before me, she was about your age. She's the best big sister I could have ever asked for."

Rymer fidgeted a little bit. "How come?"

"She took care of me. She looked out for me, played with me, taught me all kinds of things. I always looked up to her - I still do. She's one my best friends in the whole galaxy." He continued when Rymer

didn't say anything. "Even now that we're grown up and have kids of our own, I know I can always count on Jenn, and she knows she can always count on me. She told me once that it was hard to get used to being a big sister after having our parents all to herself for so long. She was angry at them because she thought it meant she wasn't enough, and that they wouldn't love her anymore. But it wasn't true, Ry. They had enough love for both of us, just like your mamas have enough love for both you and Davlon. I know if you let yourself, he'll have as great a big sister as I do."

Rymer was quiet for a long time, then she shrugged a little. "Aunt Jenn's pretty cool, I guess."

Kes chuckled a little, squeezing the girl in a side hug. "Just do me a favor and think about it, okay?"

Rymer breathed a deep sigh. "Okay."

* * *

><p>The following week found Kes and Shara watching both children in the Keen home, waiting for Tali and Delu to come back from planetside with Davlon. Rymer hadn't had any more angry outbursts, but rather had been quieter than usual when not playing with Poe. He had been a champion, all four parents thought, coming up with game after game to keep her occupied and laughing. Her mothers truly weren't sure how she'd react to Davlon's arrival, and had asked their friends to be there to make it as comfortable as possible for her.</p>

Rymer froze when the front door opened.

Tali entered first, a small, clothed bundle nestled in her arms, and Delu followed, closing the door. Tali came forward into the sitting room, kneeling slowly at the edge of the carpet.

"Rymer? Would you like to come meet him?"

The young girl stood slowly, walking forward until she stood directly in front of her mothers. As she approached, a small fist broke free of its confines, waving and flexing in the air. Rymer eyed the hand, peering down at him cautiously.

"How old is he?"

"He's only six months," Tali answered quietly.

Rymer continued to stare down at him. "He's so little."

"You were this little once, before we met you," Delu said.

Rymer nodded, almost in a trance. She slowly reached one hand out and brushed a single finger along the tiny fist waving about. The hand opened, wrapping around her finger and holding fast. Rymer peered deeper into the bundle and saw two small brown eyes staring back up at her.

After a moment, she smiled.

"Hi Dav. I'm your big sister."

4. Chapter 4

I'd like to dedicate this chapter to Leia, my guest reviewer that's left the loveliest reviews on every chapter so far!

Leia - My family has a lot of history of both adopting children and giving children up for adoption when necessary. It's a difficult decision to make either way, I'm glad you and your sister found parents that love you just like Ry and Dav!

I don't own Star Wars. Consider yourselves disclaimed.

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><p>YAVIN-4

8 YEARS OLD

The steady beep of the holocommunicator woke Delu first, who grunted and rolled over, slapping her hand around the nightstand until her fingers closed around the cursed technology. Pressing blindly, she answered with her eyes still closed.

"'Lo? W'time 's'it?"

_ "Delu, wake up, it's Kes. I need your help." _

Delu opened her eyes now, blinking groggily as she finally looked down at the communicator. A spark of worry ignited in her stomach as she realized the time. "Kes, it's 4 in the morning, what's wrong?"

_ "I don't know, it's - it's Shara. Something's happened." _

Del found herself racking her brain in her exhausted state. Shara had been helping out a friend lately, flying for his shuttle business when he found himself shortstaffed. If Delu remembered correctly, she had agreed to work an overnight shift this particular night.

_ "Can I bring Poe to you?" _

"Of course you can. See you soon."

Tali was sitting up now, rubbing at her tired eyes. "What's going on?"

"I'm not sure," Delu said, throwing back the covers and rooting around in the dark for her robe. "Something's wrong with Shara, Kes is on his way here now with Poe. Go back to sleep." Delu kissed her wife on the forehead.

"What? No, what's wrong?" Tali was climbing out of bed now as well, snatching her robe from its hook and following Delu down the hall.

"I don't know, honey."

There was a single light knock on the door just as Delu reached it, opening it to reveal Kes with a sleeping Poe on his shoulder.

"Thank you." Even in the dark, he was clearly worried and anxious.
"Rymer's bed?"

"Yes. What's going on, Kes?"

"I don't know," he whispered, slipping through the door to the young girl's room and depositing his sleeping child underneath the covers. The boy immediately rolled over so he and Rymer were forehead to forehead, their stuffed Ewoks cradled between them. "They're getting too old for this," Kes said in what was meant to be an offhanded way, but he was betrayed when his voice cracked.

The adults slipped from the room, Kes moving immediately for the door. "All I know is there was an accident, they said they can't tell me anything else. I have to get planetside. I don't know how long I'll be."

"Go," Tali said firmly. "We'll take care of Poe. Comm us when you know what's going on."

With a nod, he was out the door.

Tali and Delu exchanged tired, worried glances. Tali moved first, shuffling towards the kitchen. "Tea?"

Delu thought for a moment, realizing she likely wouldn't be able to get back to sleep. "Thank you, honey."

* * *

><p>Poe woke slowly, yawning as he opened his eyes. He blinked once, confused, when he saw Rymer sleeping on the next pillow, one little fist balled up under her head. He reached over and poked her shoulder until she whined, pushing his hand away.</p>

"Ry, wake up."

She scrunched her face up before opening one eye. "Poe? What're you doing here?"

"I dunno," he shrugged, burrowing a little deeper under the blankets. "I just woke up here."

"That's weird." They laid there for a while, talking about what they wanted to do that day, until a short while later the door opened and Delu's head slipped through.

"Good morning little starfighters. Breakfast is ready, hurry up before we give it all to little Dav!"

Poe and Rymer both rolled their eyes exaggeratedly. Like a two year old could eat all that food!

All the same, they rushed downstairs in their pajamas, pretending to be literally attached at the hip. They insisted on sitting in the same chair and using only one set of utensils between them - Rymer cut their pancakes with one hand while Poe clumsily fed them with the other, both giggling the entire time and making faces with Davlon in his high chair. Tali and Delu grinned through their anxiety - after

five hours with still no contact from Kes, they were beginning to truly worry.

"Tali, Delu, where's my mom and dad?" Poe asked as he and Rymer washed their hands after breakfast.

"Your dad got a call from your mom's work last night, he had to go help her with something," Tali delivered the practiced lie smoothly. "So you'll be hanging out with us until they get home."

Poe and Rymer accepted the explanation easily, taking the juice Delu poured for them and moving to the sitting room to watch a holovid.

It was a short while later that there was a knock at the door. Making sure the children were focused on their vid, Delu and Tali moved quickly to open it, revealing Kes's still form. His eyes were anguished as he met their gazes, but when he opened his mouth, a strangled gasp was all that came out. Tears flooded his eyes as he dropped his head.

Slowly realizing what had happened, Tali and Delu took their friend into their arms, rocking him gently between the two of them. He clung tightly to both of them for comfort.

"I have to tell Poe," he finally managed. The women let him go, nodding, and Delu called Rymer into the kitchen.

"What's wrong with Kes?" she asked, kicking her feet in her chair as she tickled underneath Davlon's chin. "What's he talking to Poe about?"

"NO!"

Rymer's head jerked up when Poe shouted, slipping down from her chair and running towards the sitting room before her mothers could stop her. Poe flew past her, running through the front door and into the treeline. "Poe? POE!" Rymer turned to her mothers, unable to understand why her best friend was ignoring her. "What's wrong, Mamas? Something's wrong with Poe and Kes!"

"I know, honey, I know," Tali said, tears in her own eyes as she knelt to look at her daughter. "And Poe is really gonna need your help for a while. There was an accident early this morning while Shara was working. She, uh...she didn't make it, sweetheart. Shara's gone."

Rymer went very still as her eyes widened. "Gone? ...she's...she's dead?"

Tali nodded, crying in earnest now for her friend and the family she left behind. "I'm sorry, Ry."

Rymer nodded almost mechanically. "I have to find Poe."

Tali sighed. "He might want to be by himself for a while."

But Rymer was already shaking her head. "No. Even if he thinks he does, he doesn't. I know." And she was gone through the door, following her friend's path through the trees. Tali stared after her

for a moment before joining her wife in comforting their newly widowed friend.

* * *

><p>Rymer found Poe exactly where she expected to. The hull of Shara's A-Wing was open, and all she had to do was climb the ladder to find him curled up in the cockpit wearing his mother's helmet.</p>

"Go 'way."

Rymer ignored him, climbing fully into the cockpit and squishing herself into the chair next to him. She hunkered down until she was comfortable, leaning heavily against Poe with her head resting on the helmet.

Poe growled under his breath. "Will you get off me? I said go away."

"No," Rymer said. Poe huffed and crossed his arms over his chest, refusing to look at her. As she watched him, she could see his bottom lip start to quiver.

Tears filling her eyes, she gently put her hand on his shoulder.

"I'm sorry, Poe."

His answer was a gasping sob as he turned and flung himself at her, helmet knocking off his head. They wrapped their arms around each other as tightly as they could as they both began to cry over their loss.

"It's not fair!" he cried. "I want her back!"

Rymer could only squeeze him tighter.

They sobbed together for what felt like hours, until finally they slumped back in the cockpit, exhausted.

"I want my mama back," he said again, quietly this time.

Rymer sniffed loudly. "We can share mine. Dav won't mind."

Poe felt the ghost of a smile cross his face. "Thanks, Ry."

* * *

><p>I've got two more chapters written that need editing, and four to six more after that have been roughly outlined but still need to be fleshed out. I'm really enjoying Poe and Ry, I hope you guys are too!</p>

5. Chapter 5

I recently gave a real life friend access to my fanfiction profile for the first time. Super nervous. Hope you like it hon!

I don't own Star Wars. Consider yourselves disclaimed.

* * *

><p>YAVIN-4

11 YEARS OLD

"Why do we have to go to school? Why can't we stay home and learn from Tali like we've been doing?"

Poe had burst through the front door of the Keen house with his father at his heels during breakfast, plopping himself into the chair next to Rymer's and stealing a piece of toast from her plate. Rymer only rolled her eyes, having prepared an extra slice for just that purpose.

"Because you've already gone through everything I'm licensed to teach," Tali said as she cut pancakes into small pieces for Davlon. "And I'm sick of your ugly faces and want you both out of my hair."

Poe and Rymer grinned at each other as Kes poured himself a cup of tea. "I'm still not sure how Tali's stayed home with you all these years without murdering you both out of sheer frustration."

"Oh I tried - alas, my calling is not that of an assassin."

There were chuckles around the table before Kes leaned forward over his tea.

"You guys will like it, trust me. Maybe you'll even make some new friends."

Both children looked at each other, brows furrowed, then back at their parents. "Why would we do that?" they asked in unison.

Delu rolled her eyes. "Why, indeed. Alright, little starfighters, I hear the transport shuttle. Time for school!"

* * *

><p>"This is school?" Rymer said as she and Poe stepped from the school shuttle. The colony was still growing, and there was only one school for the scattered children living in the area. They could see a few children close to their age and maybe twenty more ranging to eighteen or so.<p>

"Looks like it," Poe said, squeezing the hand she had slipped into his. "Come on." They walked across the yard to the school building, seeing that it was one large room inside set up to define clearly separate areas. One of the teachers greeted them and showed them where they could put their schoolbags before ushering them back outside to play until it was time for class to start.

They were quickly approached by two of the children that looked to be their age, both boys. They stopped in front of Poe, smiling and out of breath.

"Wanna come play tag?"

"Sure!" Poe returned with a smile, moving to follow them. "Come on, Ry!"

Both of the other boys laughed. "She can't play!" one of them said.

Poe stopped in his tracks, frowning. "Why not?"

"Because she's just a girl!" the other one said, as though it were a disease. Poe's frown deepened.

"Oh. Nevermind then."

The two boys were surprised. "But you can still play with us, just no girls allowed."

"That's dumb. She's my friend, I don't want to play if she's not allowed. See you later." He took a confused Rymer by the hand and led her away, back into the school.

"What's wrong with me being a girl?" she asked, looking back over her shoulder as the boys ran off.

Poe shrugged. "Nothing, I think."

"Is everything alright?"

They looked up in surprise to see one of the teachers looking over at them from her class space. She smiled at them and apologized for startling them.

"You're Poe Dameron and Rymer Keen, right? I'm Miss Hargrin, I'm going to be your teacher for the next two years. It sounded like something happened outside?"

Rymer nodded. "Two boys said Poe could play with them, but I couldn't since I'm a girl. Why does that matter?"

Miss Hargrin pursed her lips. "Sometimes, Rymer, little boys are raised to think that little girls can't do all the same things they can - that they're not smart enough or strong enough. Poe, what did you say when they told you Rymer couldn't play with them?"

"I said nevermind 'cuz that's dumb. Rymer's smarter and stronger than anybody! She's almost as good a pilot as me, we're gonna be the best pilots in the galaxy!"

"Is that right?" Miss Hargrin looked between the two of them, beginning to recognize the bond she was seeing.

"Yeah! We fly my mom's A-Wing almost every day, soon we can start target practice with it too!" Rymer was nodding along enthusiastically.

Miss Hargrin laughed lightly at the two. "Sounds like you two are a couple of budding adventurers! You're exactly right, Poe - Rymer is just as smart and strong as anyone else, no matter if she's a girl. You two are very special to understand that at such a young age. Maybe you can even teach the other kids around here a little

something."

* * *

><p>A few weeks into school, nothing had changed about Poe and Rymer's friendship or their relationship with their classmates. The boys still refused to let Rymer play with them, and as such Poe refused to play with them either.</p>

The students were playing in the yard as they usually did while waiting for the afternoon shuttle to take them home, but Rymer had run back inside to use the 'fresher, so Poe was the only one Delu could see as she pulled up on her speeder.

"Hey little starfighter! Where's Ry?"

"She'll be back outside in a second. How come you're picking us up today?"

"I left work a little early and thought we'd go for a ride around the colony," Delu grinned, showing him the sidecar she'd attached for the two of them with their helmets resting inside. Poe's grin split his face. Riding in the speeder was almost as fun as flying.

"Whoa! Poe, is that your mom's speeder?"

"It's so cool, can we ride it?"

The boys from their class had crowded close to the speeder, and Poe shook his head. "No, this is Ry's mom, it's her speeder. You don't want to play with her, remember?" The boys were both surprised and clearly a little dejected, shuffling away with slumped shoulders. Rymer didn't even see them as she left the school building.

"Mama Delu! What are you doing here?"

Delu, who had frowned at Poe's exchange with the two boys, smiled brightly for her daughter. "Thought the three of us could go for a little joyride!"

Poe and Rymer both cheered as they put on their helmets and climbed into the sidecar. Delu glanced around, taking a perverse motherly pride in the longing looks of the two boys' faces as they sped away.

Delu decided to drop them off the next morning as well, and this time Rymer spotted their classmates looking on with obvious jealousy. She seemed to debate internally for a moment, then sighed.

"Wanna come look?" she called over to them. They looked at each other, then back at her, shocked. She smiled a little. "Come on!"

They dashed over, huge grins on their faces, and began asking Rymer questions about the speeder. Delu was swelling with pride at her daughter's inclusive attitude, and she glanced over at Poe where he stood just behind the girl.

He was smiling just a little bit as he watched his best friend. When Rymer had exhausted her knowledge of the speeder the boys turned to

Delu, who answered them even as she watched her daughter and quasi-son carefully. When the two boys had turned their attention away from her, Poe had stepped forward and slipped his hand easily into hers and the two had shared a secret smile.

Other friends be damned, Delu couldn't help but think to herself._ Those two will never need anything except each other and a starship._

6. Chapter 6

This is what Poe meant when he said there was never really any question of he and Ry being together. I thought it was pretty cute :)

Also I've been making serious use of some online Star Wars name generators.

I don't own Star Wars. Consider yourselves disclaimed.

* * *

><p>YAVIN-4

15 YEARS OLD

Rymer was splayed out in the grass next to the A-Wing that had become theirs over the years. Her eyes were closed as she felt the warm, humid breeze flow over her skin, listening to the clanking of metal against metal as Poe worked on the ship's engine. It had been sputtering alarmingly on descent for the last week, and he wanted to find the problem and fix it before it killed them both.

Poe had noticed she'd been distracted most of the afternoon. She had been fine on the way to school that morning, riding behind him on the speeder she'd begged off of her mothers at the start of the school year. She'd laughed and chattered in his ear the whole ride, tangling her fingers with his as they strolled into the school, which had grown larger in the past four years and now had separate classrooms for each age group. They sat together through the day's lessons, only separating for the last hour so Rymer could tutor another student in Binary as a favor to their teacher. Poe had napped in the sunshine next to the speeder until she woke him with a gentle kick to his hip, but had deflected his attempts at conversation on the ride back. She'd laid out in the grass almost immediately as he worked on the ship's engine, and they'd spent the past two hours in comfortable silence.

As outgoing as Rymer was, Poe had to remind himself sometimes, it could take her a while to work through her thoughts and feelings. He just had to keep himself available until she was ready. He also liked to keep himself busy, so he delved back into his work, emerging an hour or so later with an ecstatic "Aha! Found you!"

Rymer opened her eyes for the first time, turning her head to look at him. "What's the diagnosis, doc?"

"Wiring on this modulator overheated and melted together. I know exactly where there's another back at the house." Tossing the hunk of

metal and plastic towards the pile of tools, he peeled off his shirt and used it to wipe the sweat from his face and neck before sprawling onto his back in the grass next to Rymer, pillowng his head on her stomach with his eyes closed. He sighed contently when she began to run her fingers gently through his curls.

"Keysum Tharcary asked me on a date today." Her voice was quiet, and Poe cracked one eye open to check on her, but her face was calm and her nails still dragged along his scalp, so he let himself remain relaxed and closed his eye again.

"Isn't he the one you've been tutoring in Binary?"

"That's the one. Today was our last tutoring session and he said he wanted to thank me by taking me to a holovid."

"Yeah? How'd he take it when you turned him down?"

Her fingers stilled in his hair. "And just how do you know I did?"

Poe rolled his eyes behind his eyelids before sitting up to look at her, taking in her amused expression and raised eyebrow. He scooted closer until he was looming over her, covering her upper body with his own.

"Are you kidding me, Ry?" he asked, before cradling her jaw in his palm and leaning down to press his lips against hers for the first time. Rymer smiled into the kiss, arms coming to wrap around his shoulders as his lips moved gently against her own. He took his time kissing her slowly, letting his fingers drag down her cheek as he slipped his hand to her neck, holding her there against him. She was still smiling when he broke away, kissing her cheek before nuzzling his nose into the dimple there.

"That's how."

* * *

><p>"Oh no, " Tali all but moaned as she peeked through the window next to their front door. Kes and Delu looked up from the table where they were playing cards.

"What's wrong, honey?" Delu leaned over the back of her chair to see her wife.

"It's happened."

Delu and Kes exchanged a confused look. "What's happened?"

"_It_," she repeated.

It sank in for the other two parents simultaneously what she meant, and they dropped their cards in the scramble to reach the window. Delu whooped out a laugh while Kes ran a hand over his face in mock exasperation. Davlon wandered over to see what the fuss was about, and immediately started to make gagging noises before running back to the sitting room to resume his holovid.

Poe and Rymer were back from working on the A-Wing, but instead of

coming in to join the rest of the family as they usually would, Poe had pressed her up against the side of the speeder and was kissing her thoroughly. Rymer had both hands in his dark curls as he squeezed her hips, and the adults only stopped watching when his lips began trailing down her throat.

"They are too young for this," Kes insisted, only half-serious as he resumed his seat and began to gather their fallen cards.

"Oh please, that is nothing compared to what I did with my first girlfriend," Delu snickered.

Kes's eyebrows raised. "And just what was that?"

Delu winked. "Wouldn't you like to know? Anyway, they're nearly sixteen, Kes. They're not children anymore. And besides, who else are we going to trust them with but each other?"

"Oh shut up, Delu," Tali snapped. "You're only okay right now because you won the pool."

"Okay with what?"

"What pool?"

Poe and Rymer stood in the threshold, fingers tangled together and faces still slightly flushed. As Tali and Kes stumbled over themselves trying to explain, Delu began to laugh in earnest.

Rymer's head tilted to the side with confusion. "Mama Delu, what are you guys talking about?"

Her mother managed to calm herself enough to walk over to the teenagers and hug them both tightly. "We're talking about me being the most okay with our not-so-little starfighters sucking face in the front yard because I'm the one who won the bet about when you'd finally get together."

The teens froze, looking at each other and then back at their parents. The sheer horror on their faces at having been caught finally won over Tali and Kes, and soon all three parents were laughing so hard they were crying. Poe and Rymer were both bright red by now, and Poe began walking backwards through the open door, pulling her along by the hand.

"Ry, maybe we should just...uh..."

"Yeah...yeah, I think you're right..."

Their parents only laughed harder as they ran for the speeder to make a temporary escape.

7. Chapter 7

According to my research (aka Wookiepedia) there was a Naval Academy that may have become the Imperial Naval Academy on Coruscant, but I like just Naval Academy better and went with that. It's my AU, I can have my fun!

Thanks for your great reviews you guys! It means so much to me that you like my character as much as you do and that you find her relationship with Poe to be believable and captivating. It's such a motivator to check my email throughout the day and see a new review, it makes me want to rush home and keep writing! I already responded to Souff3Girl privately, but...

SuperCocoLoco - I love that you love it! To be honest, I write my stories because they're the kind of stories I'd like to read, and...I do! They make me feel warm every time!

Firestar007 - I'm so glad you're enjoying it! I've still got some adventures planned for them!

Sam0728 - Thank you!

Zafrina - Thank you, I'm so glad!

This is the first sort of 'action' scene, I hope I did alright. I upped the rating to T for language, as I equate 'kriff' roughly to the f-bomb. I've also been thinking of starting a tumblr. Thoughts?

I don't own Star Wars. Consider yourselves disclaimed.

* * *

><p>YAVIN-4

17 YEARS OLD

Rymer knocked loudly on Davlon's door as she passed it on her way to the kitchen. "Get a move on, little brother, do you want that speeder lesson today or not?"

"Coming!" the newly-twelve-year-old shouted back through the door. Rymer smiled and kissed her mothers on their heads as she rummaged through the pantry for a morning snack. After a short knock on the front door, it opened to reveal Poe's smiling face.

"Good morning Keen family!" He made a circle around the kitchen, kissing both Tali and Delu on their cheeks and ending his round with a soft kiss to Rymer's lips.

"Oh, gross."

Poe broke away laughing as Rymer rolled her eyes. "You'll get over it eventually. Ready for your lesson, little starfighter?" The nickname had transferred easily to the the youngest child when Poe and Rymer outgrew it, as the young boy who was entering the kitchen with a disgusted look on his face was determined to join the Republic Navy just like his sister, who had been accepted to the Naval Academy along with Poe for the following year.

"I still don't know how I feel about this," Tali said uneasily from behind her cup of tea. Delu laid a hand on her wife's arm reassuringly.

"He's older than they were when I taught them, and you know they'll

keep him safe."

"That speeder is just so old..."

"We've taken excellent care of it," Rymer said, clearly insulted. "I ride it every day and you don't worry about that."

"Oh yes I do. I still don't understand why he can't learn on your mother's."

"Tali, we'll be giving ours to him when we leave, he needs to learn on it," Poe reminded her.

"I still don't like it."

"Mama, we talked about this," Rymer sighed. "The speeder is in great shape, I'll be right behind him to take over at any point, and Poe will be following on Mama Delu's speeder with enough bacta strips to treat an army. We'll be fine."

* * *

><p>Unsurprisingly, Davlon turned out to be a natural. Rymer set the maximum speed to an easy cruise and leaned back, letting the boy steer without crowding him. Truthfully speaking she had let him do this once or twice before, but their mothers didn't need to know that.</p>

They made it to the local market without incident, where Davlon struggled for the first time, with parking.

"No worries, Dav, you just have to remember to disengage the thrusters before you kill the engine. Good job, little brother." Rymer ruffled his hair affectionately, and he grinned, too happy with his experience to push her hand away.

"Hey you two, I'm going to go check with Tunga to see if that control panel came in. I'll see you in ten minutes." Poe kissed her on the cheek before loping away, leaving brother and sister to roam the stalls of fruit, vegetables, cloth, electronics, and various other wares. Davlon trailed by her side as Rymer bent to inspect a belt she thought Kes might like for his nameday next month.

She heard the failing engine before she saw it, the grinding drowned out only by the clanking rattle. Swiveling her head around, it was easy to spot the cloud of black smoke billowing from the engine of an ancient speeder the rider clearly had no control over. Turning to tell Davlon to stay close, she was horrified to see him several stalls down, directly in the path of the wayward speeder, rooted to the spot in shock.

She dropped the belt to the ground, taking off at a sprint, screaming for him to "_Move, Davlon, RUN!" _He stayed frozen in place, and she ran faster, legs pumping as the blood rushing in her ears drowned out every other sound.

It felt like hours but was really only seconds before she dove for him, slamming her shoulder into his abdomen and shoving him away just before she felt the crushing weight in her right leg followed by a blinding pain. Her head slammed into the ground and pain blossomed

through her skull, and she could only be grateful as her vision went black.

* * *

><p>The lights were dim when she blinked her eyes open, and for a moment she was confused. What had happened?</p>

She remembered being scared, and being in pain. Her leg, and her...head? Her leg was just a dull ache now, and her head felt fine. She blinked again, and slowly lifted her head to see her mothers and brother sitting around her bed. She was in the medical clinic, in a care room.

"Mama Tali? Mama Delu?" They were at her side in an instant, hands fluttering around her face and hair.

"Oh Rymer, honey, how do you feel?" Tali asked through unshed tears while Delu leaned down and kissed her forehead.

"Um, okay? I'm confused, and my leg sort of hurts."

"Do you remember the speeder?" Delu asked. "In the market?"

Rymer's brow furrowed as she thought. Wait... "Yeah...yeah, the engine was busted, he was out of control...Dav!" She looked to him with frantic eyes, reaching out to beckon him closer. "Are you okay?!"

He was at her side in an instant. "I'm fine, I promise. You saved my life." His eyes were red like he'd been crying, and he sniffed sadly. "I'm sorry."

"You don't need to be sorry, Dav, I just hurt my—" she glanced down at her leg for the first time and then did a double take. "-my...my leg..."

Below her right knee, the blankets fell to the mattress she lay on, a stark contrast to the outline of her left calf and foot.

"I'm sorry!" Davlon flung his arms around her, crying again, and Rymer forced herself from her shock to hug him tightly. "I should have run, but I couldn't! I'm sorry!"

"Don't, don't you dare be sorry." She pulled away and waited until he looked her in the eye. "I would do it over and over again because I'm your big sister and it's my job to look out for you and keep you safe. It's just a leg - I've still got one of my own and I'll get a cool cybernetic replacement for the other. I'm fine, Dav, and you have nothing to be sorry for or ashamed of. Okay?" She waited until he nodded before pulling him into another hug.

He let go when he'd calmed down, only to climb into the bed beside her and lay his head on her shoulder. Rymer kissed his hair before looking back to her mothers.

"Where are Poe and Kes?"

The two women looked at each other, and Delu cleared her throat.

"They're...not here, sweetheart."

Rymer was clearly confused. "What? Why, why wouldn't Poe be here?"

Tali took her hand, speaking quietly. "I don't know, Ry. He was hysterical when he commed us and he could barely sit still when we got here. He saw you for a moment after they removed your leg, then he just took off. Kes went after him. I'm not sure where they went."

Rymer let her head fall back to her pillow. "That makes no sense, why would he just leave me at a time like this? I don't understand."

She didn't see them exchange another look, this one knowing. They understood.

They were saved from answering when the doctor walked in. "You look well Ry! How do you feel?"

Ry tried to smile - she liked Dr. Atahsoro. The Twi'lek had been treating her injuries, both large and small, since childhood. "My head is fine, but my leg still hurts some."

Dr. Atahsoro nodded sympathetically. "I know, that's to be expected. I'll give you another dose of pain meds soon. I'm going to keep you overnight and give you one more bacta treatment in the morning, then we'll fit you with your cybernetic replacement and you'll be good to go. You're welcome to have someone stay overnight with you, of course. Do you need anything?"

"No, thank you."

"Alright. Try and get some rest, I'll be back soon with those pain meds."

After the doctor had left, Tali turned back to her daughter.
"Sweetheart, about Poe-"

"I don't want to talk about it."

Tali and Delu both blinked, surprised. Rymer had never refused to talk about something with them before, especially when that something was Poe. "Ry, are you sure?"

"Yes. He should be here to talk to me himself."

* * *

><p>Poe didn't come see her that night, or the next morning. Her cybernetic was fitted successfully and aside from the tiniest of seams, she could hardly tell it wasn't her own flesh and blood. She was quiet throughout the procedure, only murmuring responses to Dr. Atahsoro's questions, and riding home behind Delu with her head resting like a weight between her mother's shoulders.</p>

When they reached the house she bypassed it completely, instead ignoring her mothers' protests and moving directly for the treeline to follow the now-worn path she'd been walking every day for nearly

her entire life.

He was there, tunic discarded in the grass as he bent over the engine of the A-Wing, the muscles in his back straining as he worked. She said nothing, but reached down to slip off her boots. Aiming carefully, she reared back and hurled one at him, hitting him squarely in the back of the head.

"What the! Kriffing—" She was already hurling the other as he turned around, this one ricochetting off his shoulder. "Ow! Stop it, Ry!"

Rymer crossed her arms over her chest, only ceasing due to lack of projectiles.

Poe sighed, eyeing her warily as he closed the engine hatch, picking up his tunic to wipe his sweat from his face and torso. He picked up his canteen and took a long drink of water before clearing his throat.

"How's your leg?"

"Do you care?"

He tensed, throwing her a dirty look. "You know I care."

"Then where were you, Poe? I lost my kriffing leg, for Light's sake!"

"You think I don't know that?! I'm responsible for that!"

"..._what?!" _Rymer sputtered for a moment. "You...you were three rows away, there's no way you could have gotten there in time to help either of us!"

"Exactly!" he yelled. "I should have been there to take care of you and keep you safe! _I _should have been the one risking my life, not you!"

Rymer gaped at him, furious and disbelieving. "So because you think you weren't there for me when I needed you, you decided to wallow around in self-pity instead of _being there for me when I needed you?!" _

Poe stopped in his tracks, looking to her in shock. "W...what?"

"Do you have any idea how kriffing _scared_ I was, Poe?" Rymer was nearly screaming at him now. "I woke up and _my leg was gone!_ But I can't even deal with that first thing, the first thing I have to do is comfort Dav because - what a coincidence! - the poor kid blames himself! And when I look around to finally get some comfort from the person that matters the most to me, you're not even there! I wanted you to stay there with me last night, I wanted you to hold my hand when they attached my cybernetic - which also really _hurt_, by the way."

Her voice had dropped now, sounding tired and lonely. "I _missed _you, Poe. I love you more than anything in the galaxy and you just left me do all that without you."

His jaw had gone slack now as he realized what she'd gone through, and in a moment he was crushing her in his arms, feeling her tears against his shoulder as she clung to him tightly.

"I'm so sorry, Ry... All I could think was that I let you down and I couldn't stand to see you looking disappointed in me. I should have thought about what was happening to you. I love you, I swear I'll never leave you like that again."

"You better not. If you do I'm really gonna make you regret it."

Poe chuckled, taking her face in his hands and kissing away the tears on her cheeks. "Trust me, beautiful, I regret this time plenty. Really though - how is your leg?"

"Fine," she shrugged. "It doesn't hurt anymore, just feels like a normal leg. You can kinda hear the mechanics sometimes."

"Yeah?" He looked intrigued, crouching down. She flexed her ankle a few times and he frowned. "I can't hear it."

"Really? Maybe get a little closer?" He crouched lower, bringing his head almost level with her foot. When he couldn't see her face, Rymer finally grinned and pushed her bare foot into his face, smushing her toes against his nose and mouth and knocking him over onto the grass as he groaned.

"Oh for the - get down here!" He grabbed her new leg, tugging behind the knee until she toppled onto him with a shriek of laughter. He encased her in an iron grip, holding her to his chest as she wriggled until she finally settled against him with a smile. They lay like that for a moment before Rymer spoke again.

"You do realize that we're joining the Republic Navy together, right? I'm going to be a starfighter pilot, just like you. You won't be there to protect me all the time. You need to trust me to take care of myself."

Poe sighed, giving her a squeeze. "I know, I know. I do trust you, you've proven our entire lives you can take care of yourself. You just - you mean everything to me, Ry, I don't have words for how much I love you. Seeing you all bloody with your leg torn to shreds, then lying in that hospital bed looking so small and pale, I just...I've never been so scared in my life."

"That may be a sight we both have to get used to."

He sighed again. "Yeah. I know that too."

"We just have to promise to always be there when the other wakes up."

He smiled at her now, kissing her softly. "I can do that."

* * *

><p>This came out longer than expected, my inspiration kind of ran away with me. What did you think?</p>

8. Chapter 8

Oh wow! Big thanks to sarahmichelleellarfan1 for reviewing every single chapter as they read! I'm so glad you're enjoying the story! Also, I've found a fair amount of Poe/OC fics on ao3 and tumblr as well.

Guest - Thank you!

Souffl3Girl - whaaaat?! I sent you PMs after both of your last two reviews! Now when I look they're not in my Outbox! I'm not surprised, I've not been getting a lot of my email alerts either. They were along the lines of: I'm really glad you're enjoying my story, and I'm so flattered I'm inspiring you to dive in and write your own! To be honest, I have like six or seven Wookiepedia tabs up at all times for reference, and whatever I can't verify, I make up! That's the beauty of fanfiction - it's written both by and for fans, and we don't have to be afraid to take artistic license with our work! For instance, canon says Shara began to teach Poe to fly at age 6, but that doesn't mean it wasn't for Rymer's benefit! You should enjoy what you're writing and the process should make you happy, otherwise what's the point? I think you should ABSOLUTELY write your own story, and I've already followed your profile so I can read it when you decide to post! Also, in response to your last review - I know, right? Boys are stupid sometimes, no matter what galaxy they're from.

JustDreamAboutIt - Thank you so much! Your wish is my command!

Firestar007 - Thank you so much! I'm thinking it's been going on since about the time they started school and proved that it was still just the two of them against the galaxy. I may write that one-shot someday!

Okay, so I waited a while to write this chapter because I wasn't exactly sure when/where I wanted to set it, and the only life event that's really been speaking to me lately that fits well chronologically is another tragedy, and I don't want you guys to think their lives are just one depressing event after another. But I also don't want to let writer's block stand in my way. So I mentioned my dilemma to my friend Kelly - the same friend I shared my profile link with, who's been reading one of my other stories so far coughshamelessplugformyprofilecough - and she quoted Gandalf to me. A quote I sadly can't remember at the moment, but was about the fact that very few stories have more than just a little happiness in them, and it actually hit home at the time. And I also thought of another quote, one by Kurt Vonnegut - "Be a sadist. No matter how sweet and innocent your leading characters, make awful things happen to them in order that the reader may see what they are made of."

So you know what. Fuck it. Let me get this off my chest and hopefully something new will strike. This one's for you, Kelly.

I really would love suggestions and requests!

YOU GUYS I FOUND A NAME GENERATOR THAT ALSO GIVES YOU BACKGROUND AND HOME PLANET SHIT'S GETTING REAL YOU GUYS.

* * *

><p>REPUBLIC NAVAL ACADEMY

CORUSCANT

AGE 18

The first year was all about books, flight training, and rotating through so many squad rosters they could hardly begin to remember their fellow cadet's names for weeks. Poe and Rymer hardly managed to see each other when not in class, and when they were together that time was spent either studying or sleeping, usually both. Four months in had them confused to the point of frustration - every single instructor and cadet who had seen them fly together could see how fluid they were in the air together, how easily they could read each other's flight patterns and shift their own to accommodate, Rymer's slightly more accurate firing skills making up for Poe's slightly superior piloting skills.

But they were never put on the same flight roster!

"I don't get it," Poe grumbled, stabbing his fork at the vegetables on his tray. They sat in the canteen with a few of the friends they'd made, deciding for once to leave their books in their rooms and eat in peace. "We easily make the best team here, why are they starting to use regular rosters and don't have us flying together?"

"Isn't it obvious?" Suhail mumbled from where her sage green head lay on her arms, white hair tousled. Rymer grinned at her reptilian roommate - the small Chubbit was formerly a princess on her home planet of Aridus who had abdicated her throne in favor of flying for the Republic, but her biting sarcasm and lazy demeanor belied her regal upbringing.

"Enlighten us, oh royal one."

Suhail swatted a hand out blindly, her half-hearted slap missing Rymer by several inches. She sighed heavily and exaggeratedly, sitting up. "Starting next year we'll be flying with our assigned squadrons until we graduate, and we'll probably be assigned with them in the fleet as well. They need to make sure they're using every strength exactly where it's needed, so there's no way they'll have you flying together. They're grooming you both for command."

Rymer and Poe blinked. Command had always been their dream, but they hadn't noticed any special treatment or attention. If anything, they felt their instructors were sometimes harsher with them than the other cadets. "Are you sure?" Poe asked her.

"This is the first place in my life I haven't been groomed for command. Trust me, I know it when I see it."

"I mean, it makes sense," Suns mused, leaving back in his chair and twirling his fork in his fingers. "You're both top in our class, even though Dameron drives the instructors crazy."

"That's only because she's too good at making herself look innocent!" Poe insisted, jabbing his fork in Rymer's direction. His girlfriend only smirked and kissed his cheek.

"You guys are disgusting," Rig complained, covering her eyes with one hand as she continued to eat with the other.

"You sound like my kid brother," Ry said dryly.

"Smart kid."

Muran smirked at her across the table. "You're just cranky because that cute second year girl won't look twice at you." He wagged his eyebrows suggestively.

"Shut up Muran!"

"Cadets Keen and Dameron?" The table looked up to see the familiar third year cadet that was the Admiral's intern/personal assistant. "Admiral Scardri needs to see you both in his office." He turned and walked away without saying anything else.

Poe and Rymer looked at each other and then their friends, eyebrows furrowed.

"I guess we'll find you guys later," Poe said, taking both of their trays on one hand and lacing the fingers of his free hand with hers.

The walk was only a few short minutes, and they let them give each other a final squeeze before letting their hands drop to their sides. Poe rapped his knuckles against the door firmly.

"Come in."

The office of the head of the academy was large, but relatively spartan. Tansti Scardri was a physically imposing man, but was known to give praise where it was due and even joke with his cadets now and again. When he turned from the window to face them, they were startled at the look of naked sympathy in his eyes.

"You asked to see us, sir?"

"Please have a seat." They obeyed, albeit a little warily. Instead of taking his own chair he came around to sit lightly on his desk directly in front of them. "I just received communication from your father, Cadet Dameron."

"Is my dad okay?" Poe cut in worriedly, heedless of interrupting. They were allowed one holocommunication a week, and that wasn't for another few days.

"Your father is fine, Cadet," the admiral said smoothly, watching both teenagers' shoulders drop slightly in relief. His brow furrowed, knowing it was a momentary reprieve. "But I'm afraid I have some bad news. I called both of you here because he made me aware of the connection between your families, so I know this affects both of you."

"Sir?" Rymer's voice wavered slightly. If Kes was fine, then...

The admiral sighed heavily. "I'm so sorry Rymer, Poe. Your mother Tali passed away this morning."

Poe felt his heart stutter in his chest, gaping at the older man before swiveling his head to look at Rymer. Her face had gone white and seemingly turned to stone, gazing unseeingly at the admiral. The young pilot laid a hand on her arm, but she didn't even flinch. Taking a deep, ragged breath and blinking tears from his eyes, he turned back to Admiral Scardri.

"How?"

"She was traveling to visit your aunt when the transport shuttle was overrun by pirates. There...there were no survivors." When neither teen said anything more, he continued gently. "You've both been granted leave for one week. Your transport shuttle will be here in thirty minutes to take you home, and will return to bring you back."

"Thank you sir," Poe said for both of them as it became increasingly obvious Rymer had no intention, or maybe capability, of speaking.

"You have my deepest condolences, both of you."

Rymer stood up and left the office without a word. Poe immediately stood to follow, stopping at the door as he remembered his superior officer. But the admiral was shaking his head, stopping his apology.

"I understand. Go to her."

He headed straight for her dorm, along the way running into three of their friends.

"Hey, Dameron, what's up with Rymer?" Suns asked, clearly concerned. "She just flew past us practically at hyperspeed, Suhail followed her. Did something happen with the Admiral?"

"We have to go home for a few days," Poe said, desperately trying to keep himself together until he could find Rymer. "Her mother...one of her mothers died."

He was immediately wrapped in the much larger arms of Muran. "I'm sorry, man, I know they helped raise you."

"Yeah," Poe choked out, clutching his friend tightly for a moment.

"What can we do?" Rig demanded.

"Our shuttle leaves in half an hour." He turned to Suns. "Can you pack me a bag for a week? I need to get to her and stay with her right now."

His roommate was already halfway down the hall. "Done!"

"And us?" Muran asked as they began to continue towards Rymer's dorm.

"I really don't know," Poe said honestly. "Just stick around for a bit, I guess."

The door was open when they arrived, and Rymer was methodically folding and packing clothes as Suhai gathered her toiletries and personal items, tucking them into the pockets of her bag. She looked up at them pleadingly when they walked in, clearly still unsure of what was going on. Rig and Muran waved her over to explain while Poe went straight to the dark haired girl he loved.

He set his arms on her shoulders, slowing her for just a moment, but she continued packing. Sliding his hands down her arms, he gripped her elbows until she stilled, then turned her to face him.

Her eyes were surprisingly dry, but still vacant as she stared at him. He shook her gently, urging her to make real eye contact. "Hey. Stay with me here."

She blinked a few times, eyes slowly coming back into focus. She finally reached out to grip his shirt tightly in her fingers, and he pulled her against him, cradling her tightly as she began to shake.

"I've got you. I'm here. I'm not going anywhere, I'm right here." He rocked her slowly back and forth as her arms wrapped around his torso, clinging to him as he encouraged her to breathe deeply with him, slowly calming her. She still wasn't crying. When she finally spoke, it was so tiny and broken that the tears finally began to spill from his own eyes.

"Don't leave me."

"Never. Come on, let's go home."

* * *

><p>End of Part 1. Will be continued in Part 2.</p>

(It was getting a touch long :))

9. Chapter 9

So I feel like I just dropped that bomb on you guys but I forgot to let you know the next part would help make it better and that was cruel of me and I'm sorry :(

JustDreamAboutIt - I'm sorry! I'm sorry! (hides) (offers peace offering of part 2)

NicoleR85 - Thank you so much!

Souffl3Girl - Kelly was tickled when I said one of my reviewers agrees with her! I'm glad I took her advice, and I absolutely agree with your notion that there should be some fluff to go with the sad! I've got at least three TFA and post-TFA chapters planned, but I was hoping to keep this relatively chronological. If The Force Awakens happens 30 years after Return of the Jedi, that makes Poe and Ry roughly 32 when the film (and my initial one-shot) occurs. In my personal headcanon they graduate the Naval Academy at 21 and defect to the Resistance at 27, which is 9 years from this chapter. I think those 9 years will take roughly 3 chapters to get through, then

hopefully I'll be diving into the assault on Starkiller Base! I hope you keep enjoying in the meantime! The website is starwars dot namegeneratorfun dot com, it's awesome! I've been looking up the planets and systems it names so I can characterize appropriately :) I'm so excited for your story - while I think the Poe/OC stories currently available are all incredibly creative and unique in their own ways, I definitely agree that the OCs themselves tend to be pilots and mechanics more often than not. I can't wait to read a fresh take! Thank you so much for being such a sweet and dedicated reader and reviewer, I appreciate it so much!

In the spirit of fluff in the face of hardship, this chapter is dedicated to Souffl3Girl!

I forgot to put this in Part 1, but I don't own Star Wars. Consider yourself disclaimed.

Part 2.

* * *

><p>YAVIN-4

18 YEARS OLD

Rymer never let go of her grip on his hand in the transport shuttle, but she still hadn't cried as they dropped out of hyperspeed over their forested home. Poe was beginning to have more than a passing concern about her stoicism.

He slung both of their bags over his shoulder, still not letting go of her hand, still watching her intently as the door hissed open. He finally tore his gaze away as they began to disembark, feeling the first spark of happiness in hours when he saw their small family waiting outside their homes.

Rymer halted next to him, and when he looked down her mask had begun to crack. Her bottom lip quivered as she took in a shuddering breath, before her hand finally slipped from his and she ran down the ramp.

Delu ran forward to meet her, catching her daughter and sinking to the ground as the girl finally began to wail. Davlon was close behind, sliding easily into the embrace as Poe moved forward to greet his father. After a long, tight hug, he looked up from Kes's shoulder to see Delu watching him. She reached one hand toward him.

"Come here, son." Poe began to cry in earnest as well as he sank to his knees, holding his last remaining mother figure as though he'd never let go.

* * *

><p>Delu found Poe alone that night on the porch, shortly after Rymer excused herself to bed. Kes was washing the dishes and Davlon had long since fallen asleep on the couch, his family content to leave him be.</p>

She sat down next to him, wrapping her shawl tightly around the both of them and wondering when he'd gotten so big. "How are you, little

starfighter?"

He glanced at her as he gave a weak chuckle at the old nickname. "I'm alright."

She watched him carefully, seeing the same sad little boy she'd known ten years ago. But there was something...more. "No you're not."

He sighed, leaning further into her side. "No I'm not."

"What's on your mind, little love?"

He swallowed heavily. "A long time ago, a few years after my mom died, Tali...told me something."

"Oh?"

"She...she told me I could call you both Mama if I wanted to, that you both loved me like your own son."

"She was right. Why is that bothering you?"

"Because I never did. It felt like I was replacing my mom, and I didn't want to do that."

"Neither did we, Poe."

He sighed again, wrapping his arm around her this time and holding her close. "I know that, I do. I've done some really stupid things in my life, but there's not a lot that I'll regret more than not calling her Mama when I had the chance. Because you are, Mama Delu. Both of you."

Delu smiled and pressed a kiss to his temple, hugging him tightly. "She knew, son, I promise."

They watched the stars in silence for a long time, before Poe sighed. "I think I'm ready for bed." He pulled away to stretch before turning to her. "Can I--"

"Of course you can, Poe." He asked for permission every time, and it was always given. He smiled and kissed her cheek, before entering the house again and making his way back to Rymer's bedroom, hugging his father on the way. He slipped into the room, closing the door and leaning back tiredly against it for a moment before he began to strip down to his underclothes.

Pulling back the blankets, Poe eased himself onto the bed that was technically too small for the two of them now, but neither of them minded. Rymer turned to face him, sliding against the wall until he was comfortable, before settling herself into his arms.

"I didn't think you'd still be awake."

"I couldn't sleep."

He kissed her forehead, smoothing his hand along her spine through her sleepshirt. "I don't think I will either."

"It's not fair," she whispered against his neck. "I want her

back."

Remembering her own comfort for him ten years ago, he held her more tightly.

"I want my mama back."

* * *

><p>The burial service was held two days later, a colony-wide event. The dinner after was raucous, as was Yavin-4 tradition, a whirlwind of music and dancing as the somber mood began to lift and life was celebrated in the face of death. Poe and Delu led the crowd in a round of Tali's favorite drinking song, while Rymer danced in wide, stomping circles with Davlon, who had horrified her by growing to exactly her height in their four month separation.</p>

It was a late night that saw Davlon going to bed shortly after his first mouthful of ale, leaving the rest of his amused family sitting comfortably in the grass, sharing drinks and stories of Tali's life.

"I never let her cut my hair again," Poe finished with a shudder, Rymer nearly crying into his shoulder with laughter as Kes and Delu howled.

"Oh, she was a prankster, that woman," Delu managed as their chuckles trailed off. "Kriff, that house'll be quiet without her."

"About that..." Kes trailed off, looking at her questioningly. She nodded, and he turned to their children. "We've been talking with Dav, and the three of us have made a decision. After you guys head back to the Naval Academy, I'm going to be moving into Rymer's bedroom. We all think it's silly to live in two large houses when it's just the three of us now."

"And besides, it'll be nice to have company when Davlon's off to the Academy as well," Delu added. Poe and Rymer could only agree - they both knew their parents would consider themselves married to their respective spouses for the rest of their lives, and nothing would be better for them than to have a dear friend to spend those years with.

"But what about when we come home from school?" Rymer asked. "Should I get an apartment on Coruscant?"

"No need," Kes told her. "I'm giving my house to you and Poe."

Both of the young pilots' jaws dropped as Rymer spilled her ale.
"_You're what?!"_

"Look," Delu started as she and Kes chuckled. "You've finished your basic schooling, you're adults now. We all know you're both in this for the long haul." The young couple blushed. "Oh stop it, you're both obvious. You need a home where you can start to build your life together. This way, when you're off saving the galaxy, we'll know we always get to see you when you go home."

"Thank you, Dad," Poe breathed, starting to smile.

"It's exactly what your mothers would have wanted," Kes said.

It was at that moment Rymer yawned hugely, blushing as she sagged a little against Poe. "I think it's time for bed."

"I agree," Poe murmured against her hair, before turning to Delu.
"Can I—"

"Really, Poe, after the conversation we just had? You can stop asking now."

He only smiled. "Yeah, well, we don't have our own house just yet."

The Damerons, gentlemen as always, helped Delu and Rymer to their feet, and the parents exchanged hugs with their children.

"Goodnight, Mama Delu," Poe said, kissing her cheek.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa!" Rymer pulled away from Kes to see her mother and boyfriend, looking between the two of them accusingly. "_ 'Mama' _?" She looked at Kes now, a smile growing on her face. "I get to call you Dad then, right?"

The other three laughed as Kes cupped her cheeks in his hands, kissing her forehead. "Beautiful girl, it would be my honor."

* * *

><p>Poe and Rymer were still smiling when they boarded the transport shuttle after what seemed like far too few days. They strapped themselves in for takeoff and the jump to hyperspeed, fingers entwined and sitting in peaceful silence.</p>

Rymer was the first to speak. "It's strange, not saying goodbye to her when we leave."

"Yeah. Every time we said goodbye she would hug me for a few extra seconds and tell me it was from my mom."

She looked at him, surprised. "You never told me that."

He smirked. "It was a private ritual between two mothers and their son."

She rolled her eyes at him playfully. "You know what else is strange?"

"What?"

"The next time we come home we'll actually be living together."

Poe laughed and kissed her once before settling back in his chair, closing his eyes to nap for the few hours it would take them to reach Coruscant. "We've been living together since we were four, we've just been sharing two houses."

* * *

><p>Work is busy right now guys, so I may not have more out until the weekend. I'll do my best to have something up as quickly as possible!<p>

End
file.